

Message Text

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17

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INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 9978

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR KS

SUBJECT: NEW FONMIN OUTLINES HIS PHILOSOPHY IN MOFA ADDRESS

1. NEW ROK FOREIGN MINISTER PAK TONG-CHIN ADDRESSED FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS FOR ABOUT 45 MINUTES SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27. VARIOUS ACCOUNTS OF HIS REMARKS HAVE APPEARED IN THE PRESS HERE STRESSING NEW DEPARTURES IN ROK FOREIGN POLICY, SOME QUOTING THE NEW YORK TIMES. PROMINENT COVERAGE STORY HAS RECEIVED REFLECTS AS MUCH AS ANYTHING PAUCITY OF NEWS DURING YEAR-END DOLDRUMS.

2. ACCORDING TO THE ACCOUNTS EMBASSY HAS FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES, PAK LAID PARTICULAR STRESS ON THE NEED FOR MOFA OFFICIALS TO FOLLOW HIS LEADERSHIP. HE REPORTEDLY EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO GIVE PRIMARY IMPORTANCE TO ROK BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AND JAPAN. HE ALSO SAID THAT ROK MUST RECOGNIZE THAT ITS RESOURCES ARE LIMITED AND THAT THE OPTIONS OPEN TO THE ROKG MUST BE PURSUED IN ORDER OF PRIORITY. IMPLICATION OF THIS LINE, ACCORDING TO MOFA SOURCE, WAS THAT UN VOTE-GATHERING EFFORT IN ITS PRESENT FORM WASTED RESOURCES.

3. PAK ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO MAKE AN EARLY SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FOR A MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE ARMISTICE, AND OTHER COUNTRIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED, OUTSIDE
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THE UN. THIS STORY WAS SUBSEQUENTLY PICKED UP BY THE PRESS AND

PLAYED AS A NEW IDEA. IN ACTUALITY, IT IS NO MORE THAN A RE-ITERATION OF SUBJECT DISCUSSED IN WASHINGTON BETWEEN SECRETARY KISSINGER AND FORMER FONMIN KIM TONG-CHO AFTER 30TH UNGA, ACCORDING TO MOFA OFFICIALS.

4. SOME MOFA OFFICIALS WHO WERE PRESENT AT FORMER FONMIN KIM TONG-CHO'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS AT MOFA SAY THAT TONE AND SUBSTANCE OF TWO SPEECHES WAS REMARKEDLY SIMILAR. KIM'S NEW APPROACH, ACCORDING TO SOME OFFICIALS, LASTED ABOUT SIX MONTHS, UNTIL THE HEAT OF THE UN VOTE-GATHERING BEGAN TO BUILD, THEN MELTED AWAY IN THE FACE OF THE NECESSITY TO HOLD THE LINE IN THE UNGA.

5. PAK HAS BEGUN TO IMMERSE HIMSELF IN THE OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE MINISTRY. HE HAS BEEN GETTING BRIEFINGS ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRY FROM BUREAU DIRECTORS. SUBSTANTIVE BRIEFINGS HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR PRESENTATION LATER THIS WEEK.

6. PRESS DECEMBER 29 AND 30 HEADLINED STORIES THAT ROKG WOULD SEEK ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WITH 45 COUNTRIES INCLUDING 18 IN MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA, AS PART OF NEW FOREIGN MINISTER'S STRESS ON PRACTICAL DIPLOMACY. AGREEMENTS WERE PROJECTED BY MOFA IN CONNECTION WITH NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET CYCLE ACCORDING TO MOFA SOURCES AND PLANS HAVE BEEN UNDER WAY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. JUSTAPOSITION OF THESE STORIES AND STORIES REGARDING NEW FOREIGN MINISTER'S POLICY VIEWS WAS PURELY COINCIDENTAL AND TWO SUBJECTS ARE NOT RELATED ACCORDING TO OUR MOFA CONTACTS.

COMMENT: PRESS, AND PAK HIMSELF, HAVE BEEN TRYING TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION OF A NEW DEPARTURE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THAT REALITY OF COMPETITION WITH NORTH KOREA WILL SHAPE ULTIMATE POLICY MORE THAN PRESS ACCOUNTS, OR FONMIN PAK'S PRESENT REMARKS, NOW INDICATE.
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